

In the United States Court of Federal Claims
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS
No. 22-1881V

MICHELLE BRIDGES,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Chief Special Master Corcoran

Filed: April 29, 2024

Dustin F. Fregiato, Ladendorf Law, Indianapolis, IN, for Petitioner.

Joseph D. Leavitt, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for Respondent.

DECISION AWARDING DAMAGES¹

On December 21, 2022, Michelle Bridges filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10, *et seq.*² (the “Vaccine Act”). Petitioner alleges that she suffered Guillain-Barré syndrome (“GBS”) following administration of an influenza (“flu”) vaccination on September 27, 2020. Petition at 1-2. The case was assigned to the Special Processing Unit of the Office of Special Masters.

On September 18, 2023, a ruling on entitlement was issued, finding Petitioner entitled to compensation for her GBS. On April 29, 2024, Respondent filed a proffer on award of compensation (“Proffer”) indicating Petitioner should be awarded \$120,000.00 (the entire amount representing compensation for pain and suffering). Proffer at 1. In the Proffer, Respondent represented that Petitioner agrees with the proffered award. *Id.*

¹ Because this Decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action taken in this case, it must be made publicly accessible and will be posted on the United States Court of Federal Claims’ website, and/or at <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/uscourts/national/cofc>, in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002. 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2018) (Federal Management and Promotion of Electronic Government Services). **This means the Decision will be available to anyone with access to the internet.** In accordance with Vaccine Rule 18(b), Petitioner has 14 days to identify and move to redact medical or other information, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. If, upon review, I agree that the identified material fits within this definition, I will redact such material from public access.

² National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755. Hereinafter, for ease of citation, all section references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2018).

Based on the record as a whole, I find that Petitioner is entitled to an award as stated in the Proffer.

Pursuant to the terms stated in the attached Proffer, **I award Petitioner a lump sum payment of \$120,000.00 in the form of a check payable to Petitioner.** This amount represents compensation for all damages that would be available under Section 15(a).

The Clerk of Court is directed to enter judgment in accordance with this decision.³

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Brian H. Corcoran
Brian H. Corcoran
Chief Special Master

³ Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), entry of judgment can be expedited by the parties' joint filing of notice renouncing the right to seek review.

**IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS**

MICHELLE BRIDGES,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

No. 22-1881V (ECF)
Chief Special Master Corcoran

RESPONDENT’S PROFFER ON AWARD OF COMPENSATION

On December 21, 2022, Michelle Bridges (“petitioner”) filed a petition for compensation under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, as amended (“the Vaccine Act” or “the Act”), 42 U.S.C. §§ 300aa-1 to -34, alleging that she suffered from Guillain-Barré Syndrome (“GBS”), as defined in the Vaccine Injury Table, following administration of an influenza (“flu”) vaccination that she received on September 27, 2020. ECF No. 1 at 1. On August 16, 2023, respondent filed a Rule 4(c) Report, recommending that compensation be awarded. ECF No. 13. On September 18, 2023, Chief Special Master Corcoran issued a Ruling on Entitlement, agreeing with respondent that petitioner’s claim meets the Table criteria for GBS. ECF No. 18.

I. Items of Compensation

a. Pain and Suffering

Respondent proffers that petitioner should be awarded **\$120,000.00** in pain and suffering. *See* 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a)(4). Petitioner agrees.

This amount represents all elements of compensation to which petitioner is entitled under 42 U.S.C. §300aa-15(a). Petitioner agrees.

II. Form of the Award

Petitioner is a competent adult. Evidence of guardianship is not required in this case. Respondent recommends that the compensation provided to petitioner should be made through one lump sum payment as described below and requests that the Chief Special Master's decision and the Court's judgment award the following:¹

One lump sum payment of **\$120,000.00**, in the form of a check payable to petitioner.

Respectfully submitted,

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Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General

C. SALVATORE D'ALESSIO
Director
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Deputy Director
Torts Branch, Civil Division

DARRYL R. WISHARD
Assistant Director
Torts Branch, Civil Division

¹ Should petitioner die prior to entry of judgment, the parties reserve the right to move the Court for appropriate relief. In particular, respondent would oppose any award for future lost earnings and future pain and suffering.

/s/ Joseph Leavitt
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